

**DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, MAY 18, 2017
ROOM 217
TOWN HALL, WEST HARTFORD, CT**

Call to Order/Roll Call: 4:30 P.M.

ATTENDANCE:

DRAC: Jeffrey Gebrian, Chair; Members: Sheldon Crosby, Richard Hughes, Fred Fritz, Matthew McGrath, Alternate: Raymond Giolitto

Staff: Todd Dumais, Town Planner; Catherine Dorau, Associate Planner

REFERRAL FROM TOWN COUNCIL:

- 1. Application (SDD #6-R1-17) on behalf of Seritage SRC Finance LLC, owner and applicant of 1445 New Britain Avenue (Susan A. Hays, Attorney) request to amend Special Development District #6, the former Sears building, to accommodate façade and signage layout modifications. (DRAC study session on March 16, 2017. Town Council receipt on April 25, 2017. DRAC receipt on May 18, 2017.)*

DRAC recommended approval. Motion/Crosby; Second/Fritz (Vote: 6-0).

Todd Dumais introduced this item as a formal referral from the Town Council. The DRAC has seen the overall project on numerous occasions but most recently on façade and signage changes to identify tenants. The DRAC asked for specific changes in the Bye Bye Baby tenant area which they felt was better than proposed. The applicant has revised everything as suggested but one of the things that wasn't identified was the signage. Previously approved through the SDD process was signage in a different location. The Administrative SDD approval process does not allow for the movement of the location of signage on a building. Therefore, a new SDD application for signage is now before the Town Council and the applicant had other small façade changes (mainly in the rear of the buildings) that is included in the current application. The façade changes were connected with Building and Fire code issues. Todd Dumais turned the discussion over to the applicant.

The applicant highlighted three things before the DRAC today: 1) The Bye Bye Baby world market tenant space is before the Town Council on June 13th; 2) Changes to what's already been approved for Phase 1 of the project – Saks and REI. These changes were driven by best practices (loading doors now have coverings), and changes to the egress area at the rear of the building due to code issues. The stairs are not as massive as they had been. REI has requested a relocated door and windows on the rear and eliminated one door on the side;

(3) Signage was discussed – the proposed signage was now showing more specific information and falls within the parameters of the approval but are changes nonetheless. REI co-op sign was located above the canopy but they are having concerns regarding that placement at other locations so they are proposing to incorporate it into the face of this sign band.

Signage increases for the tenant directory sign facing the Corbin's Plaza was discussed. Concern about the size of the Coastal Supply sign was raised – mentioned was the amount of 'white' signage. Another tenant for the second floor will need to return to the Town Council/DRAC for additional changes. The second floor signage will be similar to Bye Bye Baby. All of the sign bands were originally identified and it was presented that it would be tenant driven. It was commented the band, as it was placed, was out of place and looks more out of place now due to the other changes to the other signs. The overall DRAC feeling was the base was too much – and the applicant agreed but left it as what was originally approved. The applicant concurred with the DRAC observations that the band should be adjusted and agreed to modify it. A heavier band and more windows at the lower level were discussed.

Comments were suggested to take the Coastal Supply sign band and move it up to the location discussed, additionally, to take the tan material and enlarge that material down into the window area so it doesn't sit so high up on the building. The applicant was agreeable to those suggestions.

The applicant noted the windows in the back bring more natural light into the space. No revisions were proposed for Building 2.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

2. March 16, 2017 – **Tabled to next scheduled meeting.**

ADJOURNMENT: 5:04 pm

C: Ron Van Winkle, Town Manager
Kimberly Boneham, Deputy Corporation Counsel

Mark McGovern, Director of Community Development
Essie Labrot, Town Clerk

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